

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill No:** HB 162

**49th Legislature, 1st Session, 2009**

**Short Title:** Otero & Lincoln Early Childhood Program

**Sponsor(s):** Representative Gloria Vaughn and Others

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** January 30, 2009

---

**Bill Summary:**

HB 162 makes an appropriation for a pilot program at New Mexico State University (NMSU) that will provide on-site professional development for early childhood service providers in Otero and Lincoln counties.

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$18,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Regents at NMSU for FY 10.

HB 162 contains a reversion clause.

**Fiscal Issues:**

According to the Higher Education Department (HED), the appropriation would be a \$1,500 increase in funding over FY 09. The program budget indicates that the majority of additional funding would support an increase in professional salaries and stipends. NMSU submitted this request to HED for review. HED has a neutral recommendation for this project for FY 10.

**Issues:**

According to HED, the proposal provides funding for data analysis needed to assess eight previous training modules funded by the Legislature in FY 09 and to provide an extension of the original Early Childhood Training Pilot Program by delivering four new training sessions. The extension of training sessions will provide more data upon which to base future programs and to offer high quality training for child-care providers in Otero and Lincoln counties. The program will also explore interest in receiving college credit for program participation.

**Background:**

HED states that training and professional development for child-care providers directly correlates with high-quality care for children. The US Department of Labor Statistics (2006) reports, however, that the mean annual salary of child-care workers and preschool teachers in New Mexico is \$16,490. According to NMSU Alamogordo institutional analyst, Dr. Joyce A. Hill, this annual income does not afford preschool teachers spending money for college courses or training. As New Mexico comprises many rural communities, suitable training is subject to the constraints not only related to financial resources, but also to distance and opportunities available within remote regions. Dr. Hill also reports that the pilot project, called Su Casa-El Mejor Lugar, has been successful with an estimated 150 educators attending training sessions.

According to HED, the training modules offered through the program provide professional development regarding:

- positive guidance for young children;
- meeting the requirements of young children with special needs;
- developing early literacy;
- nutrition and safety for young children; and
- program assessment.

**Related Bill:**

SB 160 *Require Preschool Teacher Credentials*